

**REMARKS**

Claim 1 is pending and currently amended in the above-identified application. The specification is also amended to correct a typographical mistake. No new matter is entered. It is respectfully submitted that this paper is fully responsive to the Office action mailed on January 22, 2009.

**Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103**

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Publication No. 2002/0042735 to *Narahara et al.* in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,819,232 to *Shipman*.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's characterization of the cited references and pending claim language. However, to expedite prosecution, Applicants herein amend claim 1 for the purpose of clarifying the subject matter of the claimed invention.

Applicants submit that that none of the cited references discloses a system for managing a quantity of inventory of parts constituting a product comprising a first and second inventory quantity computing means *as described in the claimed invention*. In the present invention, the system includes a first inventory quantity computing means for computing a *tentative quantity* of inventory of the parts at one of the stages AND a second inventory quantity computing means for computing *actual quantities* of inventory of the parts at the other stages. The two computing means, for example, are interrelated such that "the inventory managing means outputs the actual quantity of the inventory of the parts computed by the second inventory computing means to the

part order quantity computing means as the subject-to-subtraction quantity of inventory in computing the part order quantity.” See Claim 1. The part order quantity computing means uses the “subject-to-subtraction quantity” in order to compute a part order quantity to be directed to the part supplier.

*Narahara* does not disclose a system divided into “a plurality of stages” and that includes a first and second inventory quantity computing means. In particular, as acknowledged by the Examiner, the reference does not disclose a second inventory quantity computing means for computing *actual* quantities of inventory of the parts at *the other stages* (stages not including tentative quantity of inventory.) Instead, the reference discloses a parts procuring system in which a center warehouse is provided between a client and a supplier and a forecast-based order is made to the supplier to procure parts from the center warehouse (*e.g.*, the inventory in the warehouse is the suppliers, not the client’s). Accordingly, the disclosed system does not calculate actual quantities of inventory of the parts at a plurality of stages in the production process.

*Shipman* discloses computing a production schedule at predetermined intervals to maintain an actual inventory between predetermined upper/lower boundaries of the planned inventory. *Shipman* does not disclose having a first and second inventory quantity computing means, wherein the second inventory quantity computing means is for inputting incoming quantity information and outgoing quantity information of the orderer of the parts after they are accepted by the orderer and for computing actual quantities of inventory of the parts at the other stages from the difference between the incoming quantity information and the outgoing

information. *See* currently amended Claim 1. Applicants submit that the first and second inventory quantity computing means is distinct from the inventory tracking system disclosed in the cited reference.

Furthermore, Applicants submit that even if one were to modify the *Narahara* system to include a second inventory quantity computing means for computing an actual quantity of inventory, as allegedly taught by *Shipman*, the result would not be the claimed invention because it would not calculate actual quantities of inventory of the parts at a plurality of stages in the production process. Also, the combination would not result in an inventory managing means for consolidating the sent inventory information to be centralized (tentative and actual inventories) such that the inventory information is managed together and for displaying the sent inventory information with respect to each of the stages in time-sequence.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 1 is patentable over the combination of *Narahara et al.* and *Shipman* references.

### **Conclusion**

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicants submit that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

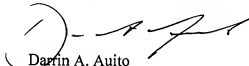
Application No.: 10/258,290  
Art Unit: 3627

Amendment under 37 CFR §1.116  
Attorney Docket No.: 052265

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

**WESTERMAN, HATTORI, DANIELS & ADRIAN, LLP**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Darrin A. Auito', is written over a circular stamp or mark.

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